

most effective and professional fighting force that the world has ever seen. The quality and caliber of Army soldiers continues to grow, despite increasing operational tempo and tremendous expectations thrust on the dedicated men and women who serve our country.

Thank you Sergeant Major Tilley for your leadership and values that have made our Army the most professional and effective fighting force in the world. Thank you for your ability to inform the Appropriations Committee on quality of life issues that impact soldiers and their families, and God's blessings to you as you begin your next great journey upon your retirement from the Army.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. ROBIN HAYES

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. HAYES. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1, I was detained due to a delay in my flight. Had I been present, I would have voted "present."

#### CONGRATULATIONS AND APPRECIATION TO STAFF SERGEANT CAROL S. MURRAY

#### HON. DONALD M. PAYNE

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues here in the U.S. House of Representatives to join me in honoring a very special person, Staff Sergeant Carol S. Murray, who has given outstanding service to our Nation and to this institution. Sergeant Murray will be honored this evening by her many friends, colleagues, and family members on the occasion of her retirement from the United States Army.

As the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge and Administrative Supervisor of the Army's Congressional House Liaison Division since 1991, Sergeant Murray has earned an excellent reputation among members of Congress for her dedication and professionalism. I had the pleasure of getting to know Sergeant Murray when she accompanied a Congressional delegation to Haiti. She impressed me with her ability to handle with grace any situation which arose, while also showing deep respect to our host country and its residents during the diplomatic mission. I always enjoyed walking by Sergeant Murray's office in the Rayburn Building, because I knew I would be greeted with the warm, friendly smile she has for everyone. In her position, she was always willing to show newcomers the ropes, inspiring a sense of esprit d'corps which is so important for the morale of those serving in our military. In addition, whenever the Army was hosting a reception or event for a senior officer, she worked tirelessly to ensure that it was well-attended and successful.

Sergeant Murray began her career in July of 1984 after completing Basic and AIT at Fort Jackson. She served in Stuttgart as the postal clerk for 139th AG Postal, Robinson Barracks. Her exceptional performance led to other assignments, including providing primary training

in office procedures and policies, and acting as a mentor for all newly assigned Military Personnel. Following her tour in Germany, she headed to Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to the XVIII Airborne Corps, where she served with the "Fighting" 305th AG Postal before leaving for Honduras and other numerous field deployments with the mighty 82nd Airborne Division. In January of 1988, she began working as a Postal Clerk with the 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey. She later worked as an Administrative Specialist to the Chief, Enlisted Records before serving as the Senior Administrative NCO for the Adjutant General's Office in the Military District of Washington.

Mr. Speaker, I know my colleagues join me in offering congratulations and best wishes for the future to Sergeant Carol Murray, a great soldier, patriot, and friend.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

#### HON. CLIFF STEARNS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall No. 1 I was unavoidably detained and regret missing the quorum call. Had I been present, I would have voted "present."

#### REMEMBERING ROBIN EDMONDS MILLER

#### HON. ROB SIMMONS

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. SIMMONS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to share some very sad news with my colleagues today. Robin Edmonds Miller, of Stonington, Connecticut, died on Wednesday, December 10, at the age of 52.

Robin's loss is both professional and personal, as she was a dedicated public servant and a dear friend of the Simmons family.

Robin was involved and respected in state politics, currently serving as chairperson of the Board of Mediation and Arbitration for the State of Connecticut Department of Labor. She was also serving as chairperson for the State of Connecticut Department of Administrative Services Employee Review Board.

Robin was active in social and civic affairs in the Town of Stonington, serving as the Town of Stonington Registrar of Voters. She also served as past chair, and currently vice chair, of the Stonington Town Republican Committee.

Robin Miller exemplified community action and public service. She believed that our communities, our states and our nation will function properly only when people step forward to do the hard work necessary to ensure the wheels of democracy will run smoothly. When I think of my friend I am reminded that the heart of a public servant is not measured by its size, but by the depth of commitment to make a positive contribution to the lives of others.

In addition to her parents, Robin is survived by her two children, Bianca Nardi and Curtis Miller; her siblings, Robert and Julie Edmonds of New Hampshire; and nieces and nephews.

All those who knew Robin Miller feel a profound sense of loss, but also a genuine sense of joy that we knew her.

#### INTRODUCTION OF THE PRESERVING MEDICARE FOR ALL ACT OF 2004

#### HON. BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Wednesday, January 21, 2004*

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to introduce legislation to help fulfill the promise made by Congress and the President to our seniors. The "Preserving Medicare for All Act of 2004" begins with the framework of HR 1, which was passed in the last days of our first session. But it corrects the legislation's structural defects that will result in more harm than help for our Medicare beneficiaries.

Over the past few years, I have met with thousands of seniors in my district about Medicare and their need for prescription drug coverage. They brought me their empty pill bottles and their pharmacy receipts. With the highest out-of-pocket costs of any age group in the country, they and millions of other seniors across the nation were looking to Congress for real prescription drug coverage that would give them substantial help with their drug costs. They wanted their drug benefit to be provided like other benefits covered by Medicare—administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, with a guaranteed benefit, universally available regardless of where they live, for it not to jeopardize existing coverage, and yes, they wanted the choice of their own doctor and hospital and the freedom to choose a private health plan if they prefer that option.

I believe that a clear majority of the House and Senate wanted to enact legislation that met our seniors' needs. Unfortunately, the bill that moved through Congress failed to provide seniors with what they needed or expected. The plan that became law will not be administered by CMS but by private insurers. The government is prohibited from using the purchasing power of 40 million beneficiaries to lower drug prices. There will be no guaranteed benefit, but rather an "actuarially equivalent" benefit whose components insurance companies can manipulate to discourage high-cost seniors from enrolling. It will not be universal, because these insurers can offer different coverage in different areas of the country. It will jeopardize existing coverage; the Congressional Budget Office has estimated that 2.7 million retirees—half of whom have annual incomes of less than \$30,000—will lose the drug benefits they now enjoy as a result of insufficient subsidies to employers. Under the guise of "choice" and "competition," this bill gives an extra \$12 billion to managed care plans, which are already reimbursed at rates one-fifth higher than fee-for-service Medicare. This so-called "stabilization fund" and a premium support demonstration project are not designed to offer choice, but instead to lure younger, healthier seniors away from traditional Medicare and into private plans. These features of the bill do not save money, according to the Congressional Budget Office's estimate. Instead, scarce dollars that could be used to provide a better drug benefit are used